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UNCLAS QUITO 002235

SIPDIS

FOR G/TIP, WHA/PPC, WHA/AND

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: ECUADOR'S RAIDS AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

REF: QUITO 2198

1. Summary. The police in Ecuador have conducted 75 raids (compared to five required in the action plan) aimed at eradicating trafficking in persons (TIP) and focusing on the commercial sexual exploitation of minors. Minors were found in 25 raids and typically were released to family members. End Summary.

2. DINAPEN, a police unit whose works focuses on minors, provided Post with a clear report of all law enforcement activities conducted as part of the GOE's effort to combat TIP. While the 60-day action plan required a minimum of five raids, the police conducted 75 raids from June 4 to August 7, 2004. The raids were conducted periodically in 14 of 22 provinces. Four of the eight provinces in which raids were not conducted are in eastern Ecuador with jungle terrain and almost no population. Post's DHS representative said that, of the establishments listed on the report that he is familiar with, they all are prostitution houses.

3. DINAPEN encountered minors engaged in commercial sexual exploitation in 25 of the 75 establishments. In an additional two cases, the minors had an immigration violation and it is not clear if they were involved in prostitution. The police found minors in the highest percentage of raids in the provinces of Azuay, Orellana, and Pichincha. In cases where minors were found, often they were placed in the custody of their parents or other relatives. In a few cases, rescued minors were taken to a shelter, a home for juveniles, and provincial government agencies designed to protect children.

4. Comment. The GOE clearly made a large effort, given its limited resources, to combat TIP through law enforcement raids. DINAPEN conducted 15 times the number of raids required in the action plan. Furthermore, DINAPEN conducted some raids as early as June 4, before this year's TIP report was published. Post will continue to follow up with DINAPEN and request additional reports on their law enforcement activities against TIP. End Comment.
KENNEY